



ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT IN TAYLORSVILLE

The City of Taylorsville strives to maintain a healthy community and has adopted ordinances to assist in maintaining the health and safety of its residents. Adherence to the ordinances is necessary to promote a safe, healthy, and neighborly community. While the majority of property owners obey city ordinances, there are instances where a property owner violates a city ordinance. Violations are usually committed because property owners simply do not know that a violation is occurring on their property. Because of this, the first goal of ordinance enforcement is to educate property owners, residents, and business owners of ordinances that regulate their property.

Usually, ordinance violations are brought to the attention of the city by neighbors. Common ordinance violations include weeds, accumulation of junk or garbage, parking vehicles on landscaping, and improperly stored motor vehicles. When the city receives a complaint, there is certain information that must be obtained before we can investigate a complaint. The most critical is the exact address of where the problem is occurring. Second is a description of the problem. This information is critical. Sometimes, we receive inadequate information and cannot verify a complaint. After we receive the proper information, we go and visit the address. The inspection looks for any and all ordinance violations.

If a violation is found, the property owner is sent a Courtesy Notice. The Courtesy notice explains why we have ordinances and explains why it is important to adhere to them. It is used as an educational tool to inform the residents of ordinances that they may not have known about. The deadline is typically 14 days, but can be less if the violation is an immediate threat to the health and safety of others or creates a dangerous situation. If the Courtesy Notice does not succeed in getting a problem taken care of, a final notice will be sent. The Final Notice has a more serious tone to it and includes such things as possible penalties if the problem is not taken care of.

If the nuisance is not abated by the deadline listed on the Final Notice, then the City has several options it can take to abate the nuisance. The most common option is to file criminal charges against the property owners. In this case, the City proves to a judge that a violation is occurring and the judge determines what the penalty is. The judge, if ruling in favor of the City, also orders the property owner to clean up the property. The fine can be in the thousands of dollars depending on the violation. The judge usually waives the majority of the fine if the property owner cleans the property up before a deadline determined by the judge. Also, the property owner is required to keep their property clean for a specific amount of time.

The City has several other options available to abate a nuisance. We can charge civil penalties in the amount of \$100.00 per day for the first 7 days and \$200.00 per day after that. Civil penalties are collected by filing a lawsuit against the property owners. The City can also clean up a property and attach the cost of doing so to the owner's property taxes. We must follow State Law when using this method for abating a nuisance. The City uses a lot of resources (time and money) when doing this and does not guarantee that a property will stay clean for very long but does provide a temporary solution to a problem. The City makes every effort to schedule this type of clean up so that the property will be free of weeds, refuse, etc. for as long as possible.

If you have any questions regarding any of these processes or would like more information on any City Ordinance, please contact Nick Norris, City Planner at 963-5400.